



SOONER SPIRIT



A Daily Publication of the 2005 19th National Veterans Golden Age Games

Saturday, May 21, 2005

Welcome to the 19th National Veterans Golden Age Games!



On behalf of the Oklahoma City Veterans Affairs Medical Center and the South Central VA Health Care Network, I would like to welcome each of you to the 19th National Veterans Golden Age Games. The Oklahoma City VA Medical Center is honored to be your host for the 2005 Games. What a thrill and a privilege it is to welcome

you to Oklahoma and the beautiful University of Oklahoma campus.

What you see and experience this week is the culmination of many months of planning, preparation and anticipation.

It is a reflection of thousands of hours of focused energy by VA staff and volunteers. There are many activities planned for you this week, all of which I am sure each of you will enjoy.

I know you will find that Oklahoma is a state with a rich history, vibrant culture and wonderful people. I believe you will have an inspirational and rewarding week of sportsmanship and camaraderie. I, along with all the medical center staff, salute each of your talents and stand behind you 110 percent as you **Go for Sooner Gold!**

Thank you for allowing us to serve you in a very special way during these National Veterans Golden Age Games. Good luck, competitors!

Steven J. Gentling

Director, Oklahoma City VA Medical Center



Ronald Moses of Warner(left) and Carl May of Muskogee are two Oklahoma veterans gearing up for the competition in Norman. They will join more than 20 others who have signed up to compete in their home state this week.



Sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary and Veterans Canteen Service

Opening Ceremony Tonight!

The Opening Ceremony for the 19th National Veterans Golden Age Games is scheduled to begin at the University of Oklahoma's Gaylord Family - Oklahoma Memorial Stadium, promptly at 7 p.m. Come early and enjoy the musical prelude provided by the 95th Division (IT) Band.

The program starts with a welcome by National Veterans Golden Age Games Director, Dewayne Vaughan. Amy McRee, evening news anchor from KWTU Channel 9 in Oklahoma City, will be the mistress of ceremonies for the evening. Other highlights of the evening include: Presentation of Colors by the Native American Indian Color Guard; a fly-over by the 21st Calgary Brigade, 3rd Corps from Fort Hood, Texas; a welcome by the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center's Director, Steven J. Gentling; entertainment by Ty Nelson, a young and rising country artist; and inspirational speaker Dana Bowman, who is tentatively planned to parachute jump into the stadium.

To salute the competitors and wish them well in their competitive events, dignitaries from the Department of



Gaylord Family-Oklahoma Memorial Stadium is the site of the opening ceremonies tonight at 7 p.m.

Veterans Affairs, Veterans Canteen Service, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary will provide remarks.

The official, "Let the Games begin," with the ceremonial lighting of the torch by the 2004 George Gangi Inspiration Award, Roy Gantt, of New Athens, Ill., will close the program. See you there!

Celebrate Red, White and Blue Day on Saturday!



Hope you're wearing our nation's colors as you register today, since May 21st is Armed Forces Day this year! In case you don't know the history of this national day of remembrance, here is a little more information.

Originally, each branch of the Armed Forces set aside a date to honor their founding. Army Day was on April 6; Air Force Day was August 1; followed by Coast Guard Day on August 4; Navy Day on October 27; and the Marine Corps Birthday on November 10.

In 1949, then Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson announced the creation of one Armed Forces Day to ac-

knowledge all branches of uniformed service. The single-day celebration, the third Saturday in May, was the result of the unification of the Armed Forces under one department – the Department of Defense.

The first Armed Forces Day was celebrated at a time in our nation's history when there were world tensions, political volatility and aggression. Since then, Armed Forces Day has been celebrated with parades, open houses, receptions and air shows.

Today, May 21, is the third Saturday in May. We encourage everyone to wear red, white and blue to celebrate those heroes and heroines who defended our country in times of war and peace, as we also pay tribute to our men and women who wear the military uniform today.

Things to know!

Community Trips

Please make sure to check in for Alternate Activity community trips 30 to 45 minutes early! We want to make sure to get you to your destination on time. Check-in will be at the transportation staging area near Walker Tower on Third Street.

Recreation Center Day Passes

Day passes to utilize the workout facilities at the Huston Huffman Center are available for \$5.00. Passes may be purchased at the front desk of the Center. State-of-the-art workout equipment includes treadmills, ellipticals, recumbent bikes, rowers, Nautilus and Hammer Strength weight equipment. Hours are Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; and Sunday from 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Swimming Pool

Swimming day passes may be purchased at the front desk of the Murray Case Sells Swim Complex for \$1.10. Hours are as follows:

Saturday: 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.; Sunday: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.; and Monday through Friday: 6 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.; 11:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.; 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Recreation Equipment Check Out

Table games and sports equipment will be available in the lobby of Walker Tower all week for use during your free time. Equipment includes volleyballs, basketballs, footballs, bocce ball, table tennis and nine-ball. Available table games include dominoes, cards, scrabble, checkers and Skipbo. **Have fun!**

Sooner Shindig

Big Dave's Music Factory will be here nightly from 9 p.m. to midnight during the Games. Big Dave has 30,000 songs in his collection so he's sure to have your favorite dance tunes. Saturday and continuing through the week, the Shindig will be happening in the Forum Building, Conference room "A" (the same room as registration). Light snacks will be provided and there will be a cash bar featuring beer and wine. We'll be making memories, so come be a part of them!



Today's Meal Schedule

Breakfast — 6 a.m. - 8 a.m.

Lunch — 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Dinner — 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Meals for the week of the Games will be provided by Couch Restaurants in the University Cafeteria. Cafeteria areas include the Sports Grill, Lifestyles, World's Fare, and Veggies, Breads and Desserts. Menus from each of these areas contain plenty of carbs from which to choose. We hope to publish information on Carb Counting to help guide food choices for diabetics and other carb conscious individuals in the *Sooner Spirit* newsletter during the week.



During the 2005 National Veterans Golden Age Games, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Library of Congress invite you to be part of an important national program – The Veterans History Project (VHP).

This project is meant to honor our nation's veterans by creating a lasting legacy of your military experience. Regardless of your branch or period of service, age, military career or experience, we need your story. By sharing it with us, you can make history come alive. Your 45-minute interview will be videotaped and given to the Library of Congress. You and your story will then become part of our Nation's official historical records. In appreciation, you will receive a VHP tote and a DVD copy of your interview before leaving the event.

Your VHP interview will be scheduled at your convenience through Thursday afternoon. Make an interview appointment today during registration. Interviews will take place beginning tomorrow, May 22 through Thursday, May 26, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Interviews will be held in the Forum Bldg, Room B6. Look for the VHP signage to locate the room.

We hope you will tell your military story and be a part of the Veterans History Project. Only you can do it, and it's a story worth preserving and sharing with future generations!



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR...

Saturday, May 21, 2005

6 a.m. - 8 a.m.	Breakfast Couch Cafeteria
8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Registration Forum Building, A Wing
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Lunch Couch Cafeteria
1 p.m. - 5 p.m.	Registration Forum Building, A Wing
5 p.m. - 7 p.m.	Dinner Couch Cafeteria
7 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Opening Ceremonies Gaylord Family-Oklahoma Memorial Stadium
9 p.m. - 12 a.m.	Sooner Shindig Forum Building, Conference Room A



The medical support area is located on the third floor of Walker Tower, in Rooms 328 and 329W,

just off the elevators. Medical support will be available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday, May 21 through Thursday, May 26. It will be open until noon on Friday, May 27. Medical staff will be available 24 hours each day, but after 8 p.m., Rooms 328 and 329W are for emergencies only.



Transportation Schedule

Transportation to and from the

Opening Ceremony at the

Gaylord Family-Oklahoma Memorial Stadium is available from 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Alternate activities transportation will depart from the front of Walker Tower. Please check at the alternate activities table for more information and departure times.



WHEELCHAIR REPAIR

Do you have a wheelchair or scooter that needs to be fixed? The

Wheelchair Repair room is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Walker Tower to handle repair needs. Staff working in Wheelchair Repair want to make sure you get back to the Games quickly. For after hour emergencies, call Greg Rosales at (405) 409-7082.

For your Spiritual Health

An interdenominational Christian service will be held in the Forum Building B2 and B4 on Sunday morning, May 22 at 10 a.m. Everyone is invited.

During the Games, the Chaplain's office is located in Walker Tower, 2 East Study Lounge. Chaplains will be available Saturday May 21 at 8 a.m. until Friday May 27 at noon. Or, you can call (405) 606-9218. For after hours or emergencies (from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m.), please call (405) 606-9220.

SOONER SPIRIT

Want to submit a story idea for the daily *Sooner Spirit*?

The Public Affairs Team will be preparing news releases, writing articles for the daily *Sooner Spirit*, and working with the media to publicize the events of this week.

If you have ideas for news stories, photographs or something you'd like to see in the *Sooner Spirit*, stop by the Media Center located in the Forum Bldg, A Wing.

We'd love to hear from you!



Look for the daily *Sooner Spirit* on the Web at:

www.veteransgoldenagegames.org